

Tracking Song and vizcacha, and misc.

The Urth list — 5 messages, 4 voices, 17 Jun 2007

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/4854>

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Matthew Groves — 17 Jun 2007, 19:09

vizcacha wrote:

Thanks, Matthew. It's "Lebling," by the way, not "Liebling."

Woops, sorry about that. Take "Liebling" as a sign of my affection. What sort of thing is a vizcacha, by the way?

The epigraph has multiple meanings.

Well, that wouldn't be a first. So there is another layer there, or several layers in one, as you observe. And you thing this all takes place on an asteroid? That would not be a first either. Can you expand on that at all? It is obviously extremely small, but do asteroids have moons?

On another matter: If all the tribes carry weapons keyed to their "totemic" animals, then what are we to make of Mantru's horned staff? I thought perhaps he might be a minotaur, particularly because he lives in a "labyrinth." But in that case it seems like Mantru should be a lot bigger. And the description of the staff gives it insect qualities: it has "a pair of slender and nearly parallel horns," it's metallic, and the horns are "gracefully curved antennae." But what about the "geometric designs interspersed with faces" on the shaft and the fine script on the antennae that is "of a form I felt certain I had never seen before."

Still the correspondence among the words "Min," "Mantru," "Minotaur," and "King Minos" is suggestive, and the epigraph from the Aeneid points in that general direction also. And what would this say about the *winged man* at the end!!! The winged man who is catching the *sun*!!! Any thoughts?

The winged man is from a bird tribe;
The winged man is a cherub, or an archangel;
The winged man is Great Raven;
The winged man is Icarus;

...

Wolfe is a tricky bastard.

Matt G.

Daniel D Jones — 17 Jun 2007, 19:34 · in reply to Matthew Groves

On Sunday 17 June 2007 15:09, Matthew Groves wrote:
vizcacha wrote:

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Suppose an asteroid were in orbit around the earth? Would a stone-age level inhabitant consider the Earth and Luna as two moons? I'm not certain that it makes sense to say that they're actually on an asteroid orbiting our Earth, just pointing out that the word "moon" might need to be taken rather loosely.

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It's been awhile since I read this story, but I was under the impression when I read it that Mantru's staff was an artifact (probably of the robot makers) and not something that he or his kind had constructed.

Wolfe is a tricky bastard.

Grass is green. The sky is blue. :-)

brunians at brunians.org — 17 Jun 2007, 19:43 · in reply to Matthew Groves

vizcacha wrote:

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I was going to say, I *loved* 'Springtime for Hitler'.

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Dave Lebling — 18 Jun 2007, 00:03 · in reply to Matthew Groves

Matthew Groves wrote:

vizcacha wrote:

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Vizcacha is usually (but not always) spelled "viscacha," and it's a small rabbit-like rodent native to South America; it's closely related to the chinchilla. Given the far future South American setting of New Sun and the South American culture of Long Sun (which prompted all the animal and plant nicknames), I thought it fit.

Here's the Wikipedia article, with a decent photo:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vizcacha>

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It is obviously extremely small, but do asteroids have moons?

Some asteroids do indeed have moons. Check the archives for discussion of the size of the setting for "Tracking Song." The Great Sleigh circumnavigates it in two weeks (by my memory here), going at a rather sedate speed. I suppose it could be a moon, but I think asteroids with moons are more common than moons with moons.

Dave Lebling, aka vizcacha

Daniel D Jones — 18 Jun 2007, 00:49 · in reply to Dave Lebling

On Sunday 17 June 2007 20:03, Dave Lebling wrote:
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How big would an asteroid have to be to maintain an atmosphere? Could one of sufficient size be circumnavigated in two weeks at "rather sedate speeds?" (It's possible that Wolfe simply took poetic license, of course.)